

PART III. REQUIRED FORMS
EIA Project Narrative

Name of Applicant or Unit Lead Teacher: Michele Taylor-Brown

Project Title: Mini-Lessons At Our Fingertips!

- **In one sentence, summarize how your project will achieve the purpose of the EIA Grant program.**

This project supports best practices in reading and writing instruction, thereby improving students' literacy and writing skills, assessed through developmentally appropriate methods.

- **Briefly describe the students this project will serve.**

Sandlapper Elementary will open in August of 2006 and is projected to serve 445 students in grades K-5th. Our students will represent the following ethnic groups: 65% African-American, 26% White, 3% Hispanic, and 6% Other. Approximately 40% of our 445 students will be considered economically disadvantaged based on free and reduced meal indicators. Though I'm writing this project as an individual grant, it will serve way beyond my single classroom. Primary teachers will collaboratively create "mini-lesson crates," one for kindergarten, one for 1st grade, and one for 2nd; thereby serving approximately 240 students.

Goal(s), Objectives, Evaluation Measures, and Alignment to Curriculum Standards (40 points)

- **State the goal(s) and performance objective(s) for the project.**

Goal: To establish a community of young writers constantly improving their writing craft because of rich quality literature that is modeled and integrated.

Objective 1: Primary teachers will increase their use of developmentally appropriate mini-lessons to improve differentiated writing instruction as measured by administrator observations and student work samples of writing.

Objective 2: Our youngest writers in grades K – 2 will improve their writing skills as measured

by informal and formal assessments to include the *South Carolina Readiness Assessment (SCRA)* in grades K and 1, and the *6-Trait/PACT Practice Assessment* administered to all 2nd graders.

- **State how you will evaluate the progress made toward the stated objectives, including the data you will collect and analyze and how the data will be used.**

Objective 1: School administrators conduct weekly walkthrough observations and create monthly reports of patterns, strengths and challenges for the district administrators. The administrators, our school's writing coach (also a classroom teacher) and the district's literacy coach will periodically review student work samples in each primary classroom. These observation records, reports and findings are continuously shared directly with teachers in a non-threatening manner to build collegial dialogue and plans for improvement.

Objective 2: Congruent with the *SCRA* requirements, our teachers utilize Carol Avery's ideas of "kidwatching" and continuously observe children and document growth. All students have individual student writing portfolios with dated pieces. These portfolios are utilized in teacher-student conferences to set goals for improvement and are shared in parent conferences.

- **State how the proposed project is aligned with curriculum standards.**

With the reciprocity of reading and writing, many reading standards, to include comprehension, and communication standards, to include speaking and listening, are addressed. However, the fundamental emphasis for this project is with writing standards as indicated in the charts below. Unique to the product (literacy writing crates) created by this project is the focus on Standards W3.1 and 2: students responding to texts written by others and using literary models to develop his or her own writing.

Strategies, Activities, and Timeline (40 points)

- **Explain why you chose each planned activity (the rationale).**

South Carolina's Writing Improvement Network purports that children's growth in writing feeds upon authentic experiences in language, practice and feedback. Fundamental to the success of this project is staff development and teacher collaboration. Monthly staff development sessions and studying data and assessments together enable us to share best practices in writing. Ruth Culham's Picture Books and Ralph Fletcher's Craft Lessons and Nonfiction Craft Lessons offer practical ready-made mini-lessons with quality literature for teachers to use. These lessons simply need to be organized for easy use and ready access for planned lessons and spontaneous teachable moments. The use of mini-lessons guides and expands the integration of literacy and writing skills in the classroom. They will help with differentiated instruction to scaffold, compact, or target instruction to meet the "status of the class" or individual needs. For example, in my kindergarten classroom, I may have one group struggling with ideas and another group ready to elaborate. For the first group, I could pull an "Ideas" folder with Culham's plans and two colored pictures correlated with Steven Johnson's Alphabet City. For the group who is ready for challenge, I may pull Fletcher's lesson on elaboration with Robert Kraus' Whose Mouse Are You?, nudging students to move beyond "list stories" and expand their ideas. A second grade teacher may select Fletcher's lesson on exploration and read Alexandra Parson's Amazing Snakes, teaching how to take notes from an illustration. Assessment should be fully integrated with the teaching and learning. As Shelley Harwayne states in Writing Through Childhood: "... the text chosen for the classroom read-aloud, the writing workshop minilesson ... is not random or arbitrary; rather, it clearly supports the teacher's effort to teach needed content. Teachers then search for literature that will help them demonstrate the needed quality, effect or technique." This project will put this literature at our fingertips!

EIA Project Overview Chart
Please complete a chart for each objective.

Goal: To establish a community of young writers constantly improving their writing craft because of rich quality literature that is modeled and integrated.			
Objective1: Primary teachers will increase their use of developmentally appropriate mini-lessons to improve differentiated writing instruction as measured by administrator observations and student work samples of writing.			
Start Date and End Date	Activities to Achieve Objective	Evaluation Data and Measures (evidence of accomplishment)	Relevant Curriculum Standards
1. August – September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will collaborate and divide tasks of studying incoming SCRA data to determine baseline patterns of improvement needed Teachers will administer developmentally appropriate pre-tests to determine components of writing most in need of improvement by individuals and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incoming individual student SCRA data will be in each 1st and 2nd grader's permanent record Patterns, strengths and weaknesses will be noted for the grade level Beginning-of-the-year pre-assessments will be the first works in students' writing portfolios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W1 K – 2nd: The student will apply a process approach to writing – from generating ideas, pictures, lists, and prewriting strategies to revising and editing W1.2 in K; W.1.5 in 1st and 2nd: Write in a variety of formats – Use pictures, oral language, letters and compositions to create stories about experiences, people, objects and events W2 K – 2nd: The student will write for a variety of purposes – use written and oral language to explain and inform

Objective 1 continued			
Start Date and End Date	Activities to Achieve Objective	Evaluation Data and Measures (evidence of accomplishment)	Relevant Curriculum Standards
2. September – October 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff development led by writing coach, district literacy coach and district language arts coordinator will present the value of brief mini-lessons to further literacy and teach beginning writing concepts Book studies: Ruth Culham's <u>Picture Books</u> and Ralph Fletcher's <u>Craft Lessons</u> and <u>Nonfiction Craft Lessons</u> (These books must be purchased; after study, some of these books will be disassembled for use in the crates.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 after-school or collaborative planning half-days will be devoted to this staff development – attendance documented At least 4 Book Study sessions will be documented in this first semester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W3.2 K-2nd: Use literary models to develop his or her own writing
3. October 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order picture books and quality literature for the components of writing determined most in need from #1 above and #2 staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W3 K-2nd: The student will respond to texts written by others: the ability to respond to texts read aloud by conversing with others, drawing pictures, and writing letters or words W3.2 K-2nd: Use literary models to develop his or her own writing

Objective 1 continued			
Start Date and End Date	Activities to Achieve Objective	Evaluation Data and Measures (evidence of accomplishment)	Relevant Curriculum Standards
4. November – December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble the actual crates to be used for grades K, 1 and 2 – consisting of Ruth Culham's and Ralph Fletcher master lessons – divided by coded folders for qualities, skills and traits of writing such as: Ideas, Organization, Word Choice, Voice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, Details, Focus, Characterization, Labeling, Elaborating, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crates of approximately 40-50 mini-lessons located in each primary faculty room. Each crate will be complete with the books, visuals, games, and necessary materials for each lesson. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Standards noted above in #'s 1 - 3
5. January – May 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous use of these shared crates for mini-lessons w/ whole class and differentiated groups Mini-lessons provide numerous opportunities for not only reading and writing but to respond to text by conversing with others, drawing pictures, and writing letters, words, sentences and paragraphs. Continuous formal and informal assessment of student writing progress & submission of student work into student portfolios to constantly re-evaluate need for specific mini-lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative walk-through observation reports Writing coach, literacy coach and administrator periodic review of student work samples in portfolios Young children develop so very rapidly; continuous assessment (kidwatching) is a must! Documentation found in student portfolios and in the SCRA checklist submitted online twice during the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All noted above, with extended emphasis in W1.2,3 and 4 for grades 1 and 2: Choosing topic, prewriting strategies, generating drafts, and revision with peer and teacher support W3 K-2nd: The student will respond to texts written by others: the ability to respond to texts read aloud by conversing with others, drawing pictures, and writing letters or words W3.2 K-2nd: Use literary models to develop his or her own writing

EIA Project Overview Chart
Please complete a chart for each objective.

Goal: To establish a community of young writers constantly improving their writing craft because of rich quality literature that is modeled and integrated.

Objective 2: Our youngest writers in grades K – 2 will improve their writing skills as measured by informal and formal assessments to include the *South Carolina Readiness Assessment (SCRA)* in grades K and 1, and the *6-Trait/PACT Practice Assessment* administered to all 2nd graders in the district.

Start Date and End Date	Activities to Achieve Objective	Evaluation Data and Measures (evidence of accomplishment)	Relevant Curriculum Standards
1. August – September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will collaborate and divide tasks of studying incoming SCRA data to determine baseline patterns of improvement needed Teachers will administer developmentally appropriate pre-tests to determine components of writing in most need of improvement by individuals and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incoming individual student SCRA data will be in each 1st and 2nd grader's permanent record Patterns, strengths and weaknesses will be noted for the grade level Beginning-of-the-year pre-assessments will be the first works in students' writing portfolios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W1 K – 2nd: The student will apply a process approach to writing – from generating ideas, pictures, lists, and prewriting strategies to revising and editing W1.2 in K; W.1.5 in 1st and 2nd: Write in a variety of formats – Use pictures, oral language, letters and compositions to create stories about experiences, people, objects and events W2 K – 2nd : The student will write for a variety of purposes – use written and oral language to explain and inform

Objective 2 continued			
Start Date and End Date	Activities to Achieve Objective	Evaluation Data and Measures (evidence of accomplishment)	Relevant Curriculum Standards
2. September – December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous formal and informal assessment of student writing progress, and submission of student work into student portfolios to constantly re-evaluate need for specific mini-lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation (student work samples) in portfolios SCRA checklist submitted online in December in grades 1 & 2. The ELA Domain dictates the Components of Communication, Reading and Writing with the 3 Ratings of Rarely or Never Demonstrates, Sometimes Demonstrates, and Consistently Demonstrates 2nd grade district 6-Trait/PACT Practice Assessment for 1st semester. Students are assessed with a 1-2-3 rubric in Ideas, Organization and Voice. Spreadsheets are created per teacher and school to analyze strengths and weaknesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Standards above in #1 Extended emphasis in W1.2,3 and 4 for grades 1 and 2: Choosing topic, prewriting strategies, generating drafts, and revision with peer and teacher support

Objective 2 continued			
Start Date and End Date	Activities to Achieve Objective	Evaluation Data and Measures (evidence of accomplishment)	Relevant Curriculum Standards
3. January – May 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous use of the new mini-lesson crates for whole class and differentiated group instruction Continuous formal and informal assessment of student writing progress and submission of student work into student portfolios to constantly re-evaluate need for specific mini-lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative walk-through observation reports Writing coach, literacy coach and administrator periodic review of student work samples in portfolios Documentation found in student portfolios (dated student work samples – state requires at least 2 per child per domain per semester) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Standards above W3 K-2nd: The student will respond to texts written by others: the ability to respond to texts read aloud by conversing with others, drawing pictures, and writing letters or words W3.2 K-2nd: Use literary models to develop own writing Expand with R3.1 in grades 1 and 2: Demonstrate the ability to use dictionary and thesaurus to find alternate word choices.
4. May 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final evaluation and analysis of student progress in writing Complete final report for project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End-of-year SCRA checklist submitted second semester for grades K and 1 2nd semester district PACT Practice Assessment for Grade 2 Final Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Standards above are utilized for final analysis